

Plymouth Historic District Proposed Expansion 2024



Historic District Commission/ Study Committee

- ▶ Michael Tubin, Chair
- ▶ James Cahill
- ▶ Kimberlee Canducci
- ▶ Anne Mason, PhD
- ▶ Lisa O'Neill
- ▶ Richard Stefani
- ▶ Ryan Vayo
- ▶ William Fornaciari, Alternate

Project Consultant

Chris Skelly
Skelly Preservation Services
Community Planning and Preservation

Staff

Lee Hartmann, AICP
Director of Planning & Development

A local historic district...

- ▶ Protects significant structures from demolition & inappropriate alteration
- ▶ Retains unique character of a designated area
- ▶ Preserves visual sense of the past, while thoughtfully guiding growth and allowing for new uses
- ▶ Incorporates compatible new construction into community-defining neighborhoods

Over 120 cities and towns in Massachusetts have historic districts.

Plymouth's Historic District

- ▶ Established in 1973
- ▶ Expanded three times
 - ▶ 1977
 - ▶ 1991
 - ▶ 1995



Other areas of Town have very little protection from alterations, demolitions, and incompatible development.

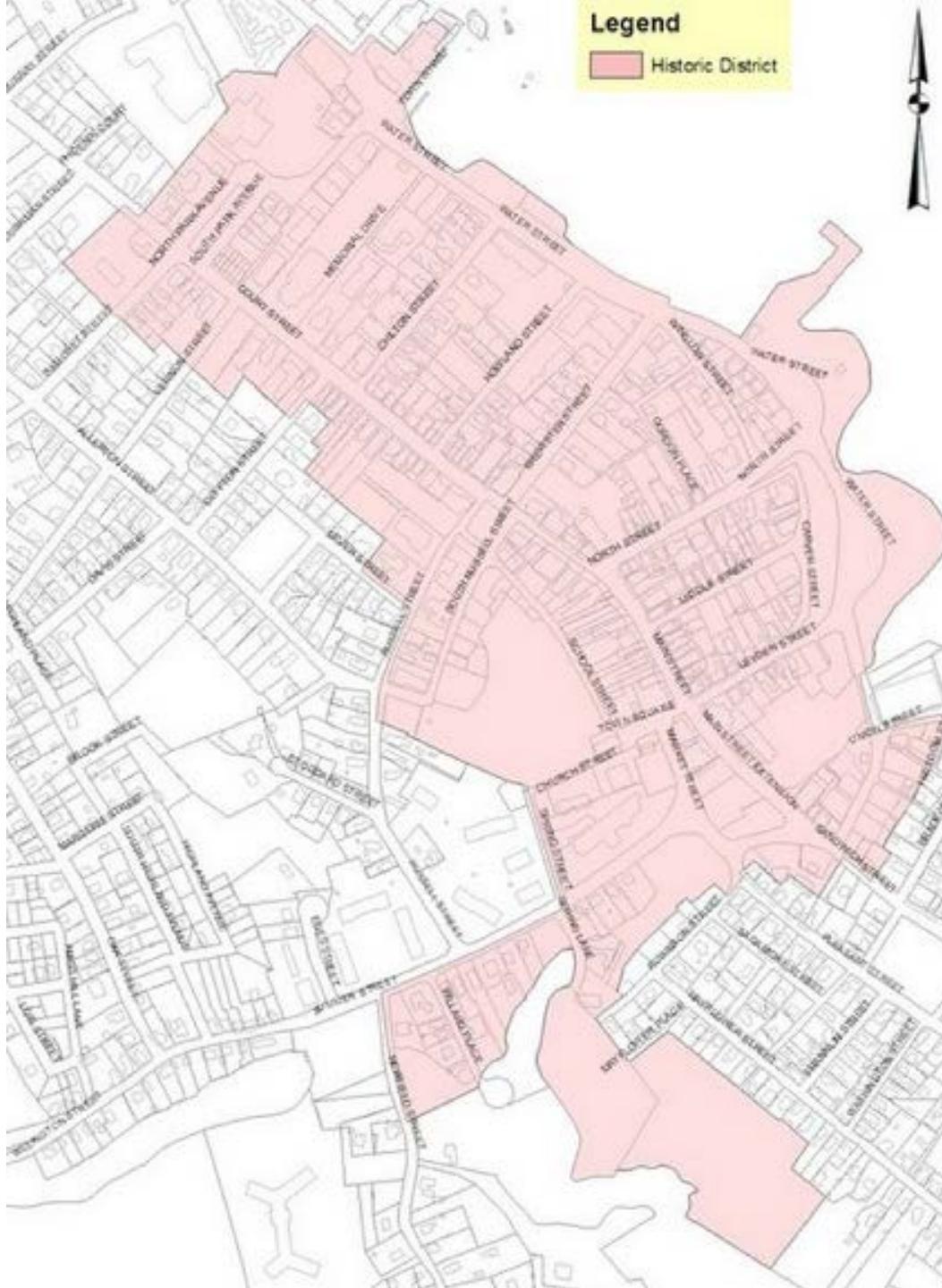
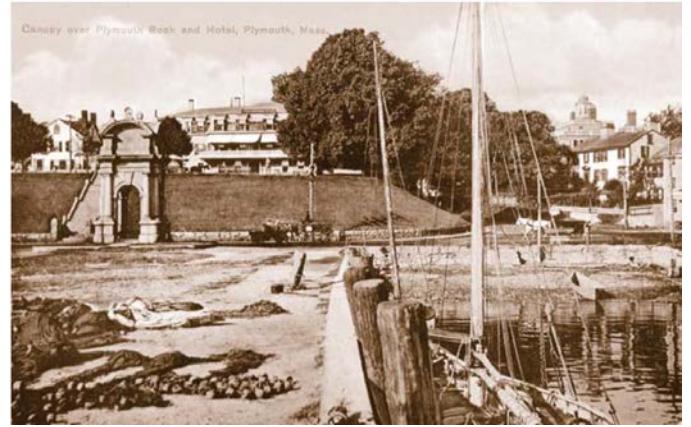


Demolition Delay Bylaw

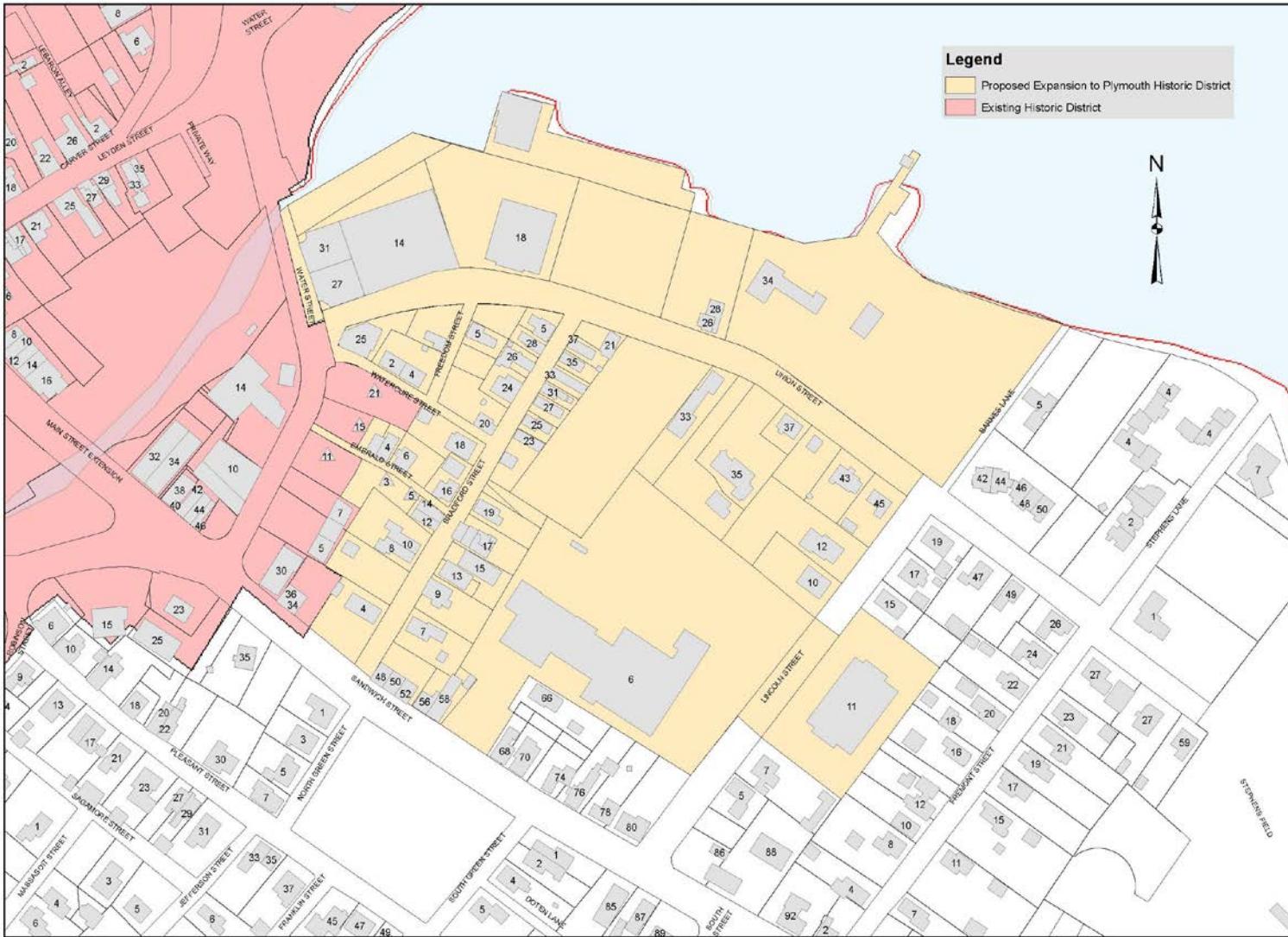
- ▶ Adopted in 2014
- ▶ Triggered by the proposed demolition of a building 75 years or older
- ▶ Provides an opportunity to explore options for preserving historically-significant buildings
- ▶ No protection after 12 months



Current District



Proposed Expansion



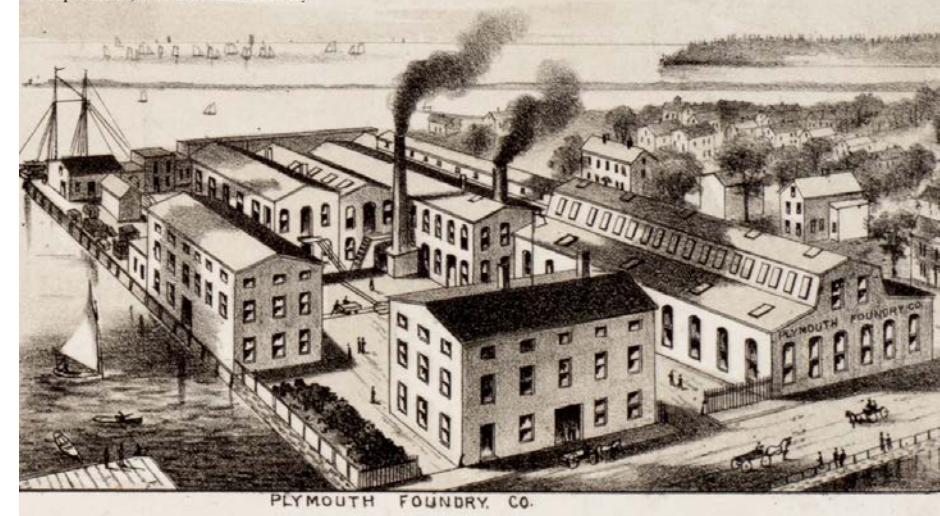
59
total
properties

Proposed Expansion

- ▶ Remarkably intact 19th-century neighborhood, adjacent to existing Historic District
 - ▶ Proximity to downtown and waterfront places area at risk
- ▶ Visual reminder of hardworking Pilgrims who engaged in shipping, fishing, and industry
 - ▶ Connection to some of Plymouth's earliest immigrant communities
 - ▶ Corrective to Pilgrim-centered narrative of Plymouth's past
- ▶ Also includes municipal buildings on Lincoln Street that have served the community for over 100 years
 - ▶ 1892 Plymouth High School (now Plymouth Public Schools administrative building)
 - ▶ Nathaniel Morton Elementary School (built in 1913; expanded 1917 and 1936)

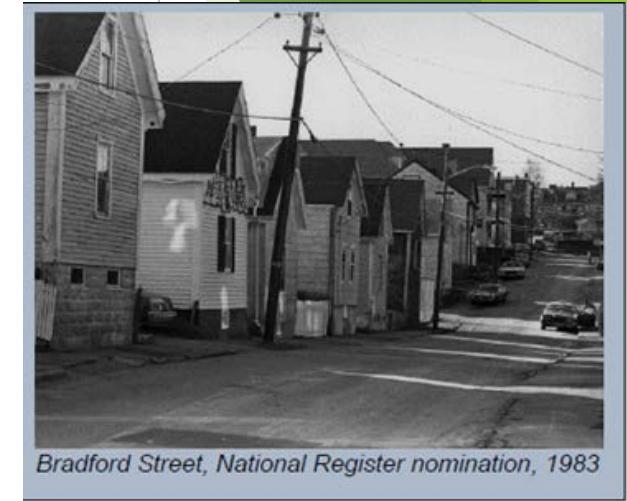


Courtesy of Norman B. Leventhal
Map Center, Boston Public Library



Proposed Expansion

- ▶ Area of expansion includes Federally-designated Bradford-Union Street Historic District
- ▶ Listed on National Register of Historic Places in 1983
- ▶ Identified as significant for architecture, commerce, industry, and archaeology-historic



Bradford Street, National Register nomination, 1983

Properties listed on the National Register are *not* guaranteed protection from alterations and demolitions.

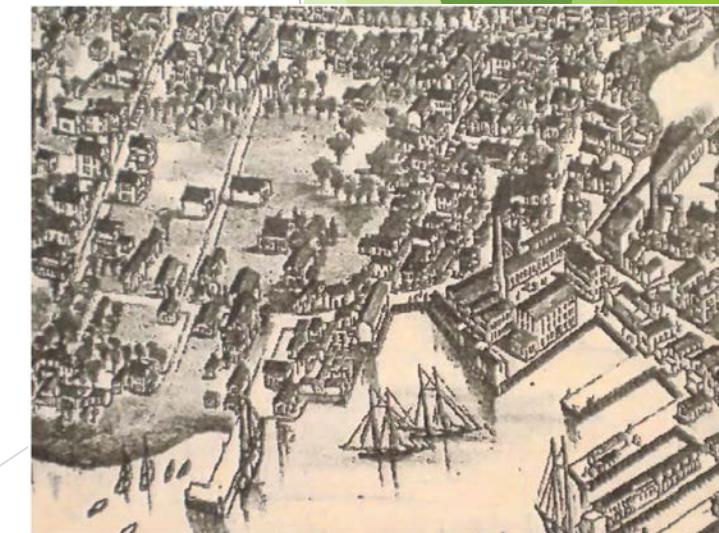
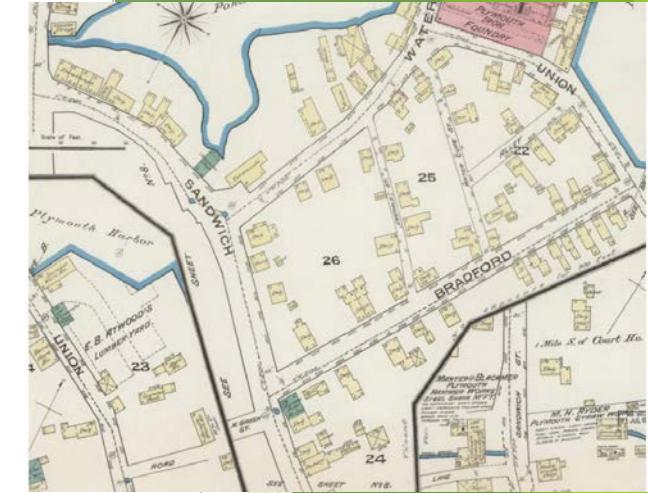
Proposed Expansion

The Public Process:

- ▶ All Property Owners Notified
- ▶ Public Forum July 13, 2023
- ▶ Public Forum September 25, 2023
- ▶ Commission Public Hearing January 3, 2024
- ▶ Resident Survey
- ▶ Commission retained a professional consultant

Local historic districts provide the most effective protection for historic properties and neighborhoods.

- ▶ Establishment or expansion requires $\frac{2}{3}$ vote of Town Meeting
- ▶ Historic District Commission reviews projects according to published guidelines, and can prohibit demolition
- ▶ Abutters are notified of proposed projects, allowing for community participation in review process



What triggers review?

The Historic District Guidelines only apply to physical changes to the exterior of a building where visible from a public way.

Examples include:

- ▶ Additions/demolitions
- ▶ Chimney caps
- ▶ Exterior lighting
- ▶ Fencing, walls, drive/pathways
- ▶ Garden houses/sheds
- ▶ Mechanical and plumbing vents
- ▶ Paint/siding
- ▶ Signage
- ▶ Solar panels
- ▶ Swimming pools
- ▶ Windows/doors/screens/awnings/shutters

What does not trigger review?

- ▶ Interior of property
- ▶ Anything not visible from a public way
- ▶ Routine maintenance/emergency repairs
- ▶ Replacement of “like for like”

The Review Process

1. Property owner contacts the Commission to determine which application to complete:
 - ▶ Certificate of Appropriateness
 - ▶ Certificate of Non-Applicability
 - ▶ Certificate of Hardship
2. Staff will schedule a hearing, if necessary.
3. If a formal hearing is required, applicant will bring necessary documents and plans to the hearing. Town Staff is available to walk applicants through every step of the process.
4. The Commission works collaboratively with applicants to find an amenable solution that meets the Guidelines.
5. Once approved, proposed work can commence.

Expansion Survey Results

September 2023

► 42 Mailed - 17 Returned (43%)

Question	Yes	No
Do you think that the Bradford/Union/Lincoln Street area is historically significant?	12	5
Do you think that the historic character of the area should be preserved?	11	4
Are you concerned about recent demolitions and changes to the neighborhood or what could be lost in the future?	11	6
Overall, do you support the concept of expanding the historic district into your neighborhood?	6	6
Do you have any concerns regarding the Historic District Commission's review process and the impact of its oversight on your property?	12	3

Do the benefits outweigh the imposition of new restrictions?

- ▶ Property owners benefit from the protection of their neighborhood
 - ▶ Adapt to change while also preserving the unique character of an area
 - ▶ Protect significant buildings from demolition and inappropriate alteration
 - ▶ Incorporate new construction that is compatible with existing historic landscape
- ▶ Districts maintain a positive standard benefiting both residents and visitors
 - ▶ Stability
 - ▶ Pride in the neighborhood
 - ▶ Peace of mind
- ▶ Recent studies reveal that historic districts enhance property values